Page 3

# **Drugmakers penalized** for large price jumps

# Warriors defeat Raiders in hoops

FRIDAY, DECEMBER

BLUFFTON, INDIANA · Wells County's Hometown Connection



## Toddlers in a Winter Wonderland

The gym inside of Bluffton City Hall overflowed with Christmas spirit on Thursday. Families first enjoyed toddler time in the gym. The annual Winter Wonderland event, also hosted by the Bluffton Parks Department in the city gym, featured pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a bounce house. themed blow-up decorations, and a wide range of themed games.

Above, all little Callen wanted for Christmas was his mom, Kaylee Arnold, to scoop him up instead of Santa. Above right, Easton Gerber was too in awe of Mrs. Claus to sit in the audience during story time. At right, Baby Millie was a Christmas or two too young for the bounce house, however, she found an adventure with Mrs. Claus. Below, Children of all ages joined in to go "ice fishing," a creative game made with magnets and fishing poles. (Photos by Sydney Kent)







# **Bluffton teen** pleads guilty to dealing fentanyl

By SYDNEY KENT

A man from Bluffton pled guilty after he sold over 19 grams of fentanyl to a confidential informant earlier this year. Two grams of fentanyl is considered a lethal dose for the average

Malvern Bozarth, 19, was charged with dealing a narcotic drug in 10 or more grams, a Level 2 felony, and possession of a firearm, a Level 4 felony. According to a probable cause affidavit, the charges were filed after

Malvern Bozarth

detectives with the Bluffton Police Department arranged for a confidential informant to purchase pills from Bozarth at (Continued on Page 2)

# **GOP** gubernatorial candidates tackle policy questions

By CASEY SMITH, Indiana Capital Chronicle

Indiana's Republican gubernatorial candidates continued to carve out their own policy paths while speaking at an Indianapolis legislative conference Wednesday, where they fielded questions about public safety, school choice and

The five hopefuls, who took a few shots at each other, are vying for the GOP nomination in the race for the state's top elected seat in 2024.

The candidates did not debate against one another during the forum, instead individually introducing themselves and responding to four questions from a moderator.

Participating candidates included former Secretary of Com-

# Men charged with killing 3,600 birds, including bald and golden eagles, to sell

By MATTHEW BROWN and AMY BETH HANSON **Associated Press** 

Two men killed about 3,600 birds, including bald and golden eagles, during a "killing spree" on Montana's Flathead Indian Reservation and elsewhere, then sold eagle parts on a black market that has been a long-running problem for U.S. wildlife officials, a federal grand jury indictment says.

The men worked with others to hunt and kill the birds, according to the indictment, and in at least one instance used a dead deer to lure in an eagle that was shot. The two defendants conspired with others who weren't named to sell eagle feathers, tails,

wings and other parts for "significant sums of cash" across the United States and elsewhere, the indictment said.

Simon Paul, 42, of St. Ignatius, Montana and Travis John Branson, 48, of Cusick, Washington, face 13 counts of unlawful trafficking of bald and golden eagles and one count each of conspiracy and violating wild-

life trafficking laws. Text messages obtained by investigators showed Branson and others telling buyers he was "on a killing spree" to collect more eagle tail feathers for future sales, according to the indictment that described Paul as

a "shooter" for Branson. (Continued on Page 2)

# ARTS ART



# Sleigh of entertainers

On Saturday, Dec. 16, at 2:30 p.m. and again at 5 p.m. "Joyful Sounds Christmas" program will be presented in the auditorium at Life Community Church. Santa and his elves will be available for photos in the sleigh and refreshments also will be offered. Above, pictured left to right are Ralph Tuttle, Dave Schultz (narrator), Lisa Rich, Jonie Cincotta, Dave Shepherd and Otto "Tank" Lowe with Curt Alspaugh in front.

At left, Joni Cincotta and Lish Rich rehearsed "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. (Photos by Barbara Barbieri)

# **Confident Putin says there** will be no peace in Ukraine until Russia's goals are met

By HARRIET MORRIS **Associated Press** 

MOSCOW (AP) - Emboldened by battlefield gains and flagging Western support for Ukraine, a relaxed and confident President Vladimir Putin said Thursday there would be no peace until Russia achieves its goals, which he says remain unchanged after nearly two years of fighting.

It was Putin's first formal news conference that Western media were allowed to attend since the Kremlin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022. The highly choreographed session, which lasted over four hours and included questions from ordinary Russians about things like the price of eggs and leaky gymnasium roofs, was more about (Continued on Page 2)

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Sunny and warmer today, cloudy and breezy tonight

Saturday Sunday High 54 | High 51 | High 48 Low 33 | Low 40 | Low 35

More Weather on Page 2

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Vol. 95 No. 38 FRIDAY

**December 15, 2023** 

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# Man pleads guilty

his home.

The informant reportedly wore audio and visual devices during the purchase. An officer noted that Bozarth did not count the money, approximately \$1,000, before the informant left his residence with the pills. A search warrant was obtained after the purchase.

The following day, officers executed the search warrant at Bozarth's residence while he was at work. A firearm was located, which then led to an additional charge.

Despite his age, Bozarth has a significant criminal history that began as a young teenager. According to court documents, he was tried and convicted as an adult in 2021 for charges related to the dealing and possession of both drugs and firearms. Bozarth, who 17-years-old at the time, was charged with dealing a schedule IV controlled substance between 10 and 28 grams, a Level 3 felony, two counts of dealing a controlled substance, both Level 5 felonies, dealing marijuana, a Class A misdemeanor,

and dangerous possession of a firearm, a Level 6 felony.

Bozarth was sentenced to two years at the Indiana Department of Correction with one year suspended under one of the Level 5 felonies. All other charges were dismissed as part of a plea agreement made with the state.

Under Indiana law, Bozarth's combined charges in this case carry a potential of up to 42 years in prison. Sentencing is scheduled early next year in the Wells Circuit Court.

sydney@news-banner.com

# Deadline for Christmas Eve, Day events

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day church and community events should be sent to The News-Banner by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18. A list of events will appear in the Thursday, Dec. 21 edition of the The News-Banner.

Both religious and non-religious events can be included. Please also send church service information if there is a change in regular worship schedules due to the holiday.

Information should include:

• The name and address of the church.

• Times and dates for all events.

• Any specific details about the event planned. • A contact phone number (N-B use only)

Information can be submitted by email at email@newsbanner.com, or brought into the N-B's office at 125 N. Johnson St. in Bluffton. Information may be edited for length or

# **Gubernatorial candidates**

merce Brad Chambers, Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Fort Wayne businessman Eric Doden and former Attorney General Curtis Hill. U.S. Sen. Mike Braun was missing from the group — away in Washington, D.C. alongside other federal lawmakers but his pre-recorded video responses were played for

Braun changes stance on qualified immunity

each question.

The GOP contenders were first asked about their plans to improve public safety and where they stood, specifically, on qualified immunity — a controversial standard that protects police officers and other government officials from being sued for alleged misconduct.

Hill cited his career spent as a local prosecutor and maintained that, if elected governor, he would ensure law enforcement has the "resources, training and protection" they need "to protect our public and our safety." He did not, however, address qualified immunity head-on.

Crouch said there would be "no discussion" or action limiting qualified immunity at the state level. She also emphasized the importance of addressing mental illness and addiction - as well as providing regular mental health checkups for first responders.

Doden, on the other hand, vowed to protect qualified immunity: "You should not be able to be sued, personally, for doing your job."

"We have to make sure we support those who protect us," he continued, adding that Indiana's governor should play an active role in recruiting young people to

join law enforcement. Chambers agreed, saying

police officers "don't do it for the money — they do it to serve." He said qualified immunity "needs to be codified in state law."

Braun said he wants it codified, too. Doing so will help "get rid of frivolous lawsuits" filed against law enforcement officers.

Although Braun said he prefers to see such a policy enacted at the national level, that's a change from his previous statements in 2020, when the senator said the interpretation of the qualified immunity standard was "overly broad" and "allows law enforcement in many of the high-profile excessive force and abuse of power cases to avoid civil suits.'

A previous bill he introduced in the U.S. Senate would have allowed qualified immunity to be used as a defense only if the officer's conduct is already protected by law or a previous court ruling.

At the time, Braun said .. it straddles that balance between eliminating frivolous lawsuits" while allowing people whose rights have been violated to make a case.

He later backed away from the proposal.

"Axe' the tax?

A bold proposal from Crouch to eliminate Indiana's personal income tax was also discussed - and critiqued — by the gubernatorial slate.

Crouch's mantra holds that the tax can be "axed" completely without raising any other taxes on Hoosiers. Crouch's plan calls for a "reasonably necessary" reserve fund, along with identifying and eliminating "wasteful government spending," but other specific details remain scant.

Even so, she doubled down Wednesday that tax dollars saved by Hoosiers would go back into the state economy. The move would also incentivize workers and companies to move to Indiana, Crouch said.

Chambers said he agreed with a plan to reduce taxes over time, but not in a single, extreme swoop. He said at least some personal income tax proceeds should be invested into "needs of the state," like health care and education.

Chambers additionally said reducing income taxes could cause property taxes to go "too high."

"I hear from Hoosiers right now about property taxes, not income taxes ... we don't want to cut muscle," he said.

Hill said he liked the sound of income tax elimination, but making it happen "will take a lot of maneuvering — and time." The candidate alternatively supports reductions to gas and corporation taxes. He's also proposed a personal income tax elimination for young people and seniors.

Braun was more targeted, saying Crouch's plan "was probably done without thoroughly thinking through that it's one-third of our state revenue.'

'Obviously, you cannot axe the tax," he said, noting he is committed, though, to curbing state agency spend-

Doden was also skeptical. "I cannot in good faith tell you we're going to axe the tax unless there was a replacement tax or revenue source," he said.

## **Doubling down** on 'school choice'

All five candidates support ongoing Indiana GOP efforts to expand "school choice" options for parents, including the state's near-

universal private school voucher program.

Chambers said Hoosier parents "need to be front and center in their kids' educa-

"We've made progress on choice, and we need to make more progress," he said, adding that education statewide needs to better prepare students to fill Indiana's growing skilled workforce demands.

Doden said although some have criticized Indiana's voucher and charter school options, Hoosier educators he's talked to say "the competition" public schools face "has actually made them better."

Crouch said she would "continue to be a big proponent of school choice" as governor, but cautioned that "choice" will look different in the future, given that the K-12 experience in Indiana is shifting now toward more hands-on and work-based learning options.

Hill said "choice is vital," but focused more on what kids are taught. The candidate said he opposes "gender ideology programs and social justice" in the class-room, and that "we need to teach children how to think critically.'

Along similar lines, Braun said "parents need to be the main stakeholders in their own kids' education," noting, too, that K-12 instruction "needs to get back where basic education is taught to our kids.'

He further echoed the other candidates' calls for expanded career training for high schoolers, as well.

"Some things need a four-year degree, two-year degree — most of it needs a better high school education," Braun said. "I'll make that a number one priority."

# Weather

Friday, December 15, 2023 (24-hour observations at 9:34 p.m. Thursday) **High:** 48; **Low:** 23; **Precipitation:** None

Wabash River Level (at the Main Street bridge): 1.17 feet at 10:45 p.m. Thursday

# Wells County forecast

Today: Sunny, with a high near 54. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

**Tonight:** Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33. Southeast wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 51. Southeast wind around 10 mph.

Saturday Night: A 50 percent chance of rain. Cloudy, with a low around 40. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

**Sunday:** A 40 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 48.

Sunday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 35. **Monday:** A chance of rain showers before 1 p.m., then a

chance of rain and snow showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 39. Breezy. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent. Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow showers

before 1 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 22. Blustery. **Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 37.

**Tuesday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 23. **Wednesday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 42.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around

**Thursday:** Partly sunny, with a high near 44.

# Russia goals

(Continued from Page 1) spectacle than scrutiny.

But while using the show as an opportunity to reinforce his authority ahead of an election in March that he is all but certain to win, Putin also gave a few rare details on what Moscow calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

He said that a steady influx of volunteers means there is no need for a second wave of mobilization of reservists to fight in Ukraine - a move that was deeply unpopular. He said there are some 617,000 Russian soldiers there, including around 244,000 troops who were mobilized a year ago to fight alongside professional forces.

"There will be peace when we will achieve our goals," Putin said, repeating a frequent Kremlin line. 'Victory will be ours.'

Putin, who has held power for nearly 24 years and announced last week he is running for reelection, was greeted with applause

as he arrived in the hall in central Moscow. He didn't hold his traditional news conference last year amid setbacks in Ukraine. But with Ukrainian Presi-

dent Volodymyr Zelenskyy pleading for more U.S aid amid a stalling counteroffensive and fracturing Western support, he decided to face reporters once more even though only two Western journalists were called on for questions.

Putin highlighted Russia's successes in Ukraine and the flagging support by Kyiv's allies.

"Ukraine today produces nearly nothing, they are trying to preserve something but they don't produce practically anything themselves and bring everything in for free," he said. "But the freebies may end at some point and apparently it's coming to an end little by little."

Putin noted "an improvement in the position of our troops all along" the front



# Men charged with killing birds

(Continued from Page 1)

The indictment said the killings began in January 2015 and continued until 2021 near Ronan, Montana, on the Flathead Reservation, home of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. It did not say how many of the 3,600 birds killed were eagles.

Illegal shootings are a leading cause of golden eagle deaths, according to a recent government study.

"We just hope that if these individuals are proven guilty that it will serve as a warning to others that we are watching," said Rich Janssen, director of the tribes' Natural Resources Department. He said that members of the tribes use eagle feathers for traditional dress and in honor ceremonies.

Tribal law enforcement was involved in the investigation of Paul and Branson, but Janssen did not know why it so long for them to be charged.

Bald eagles are the national symbol of the United States, and both bald and golden eagles are widely considered sacred by American Indians. U.S. law prohibits anyone without a permit from killing, wounding or disturbing eagles or taking any parts such as nests or eggs. Even taking feathers found in the

wild can be a crime. Federally recognized tribes can apply for permits with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to take a bald or golden eagle for religious purposes, and enrolled tribal members can apply for eagle feathers and other parts from the National Eagle Repository. But there's a lengthy backlog of requests, according to Janssen and two indepen-

dent eagle researchers. The researchers said that backlog could be driving the black market for eagle parts. Feathers from young golden eagles are especially in high

demand, with waits as long as five years to receive them from the repository, said researcher Bryan Bedrosian with the Teton Raptor Center in Wilson, Wyoming.

Addressing those delays could help reduce the illegal trade in eagle parts, said Rob Domenech, executive director of Raptor View Research Institute

in Missoula, Montana. Bald eagles were killed off across most of the U.S. last century, due in large part to the pesticide DDT, but flourished under federal protections and came off the endangered species list in 2007. Their population has been rapidly increasing in recent years. Golden eagle populations are less secure, and researchers say shootings, energy development, lead poisoning and other problems have pushed the species to the brink of decline.

# First Presbyterian Church Special Christmas **Concert and Worship Service**

Featuring the A440 Strings from Fort Wayne Philharmonic Saturday, December 17 • Concert at 10 AM • Worship Service at 10:30 AM



The A440 Strings, all members of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, will perform Traditional Christmas music and other seasonal music.

Violinist Pablo Vasquez • Violinist Alexandre Tsilibes Violist Kristin Westover • Cellist Brian Klickman

First Presbyterian Church in Bluffton is located at 215 E. Dustman Road. Everyone is invited to this special Worship Service!



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## **OBITUARIES**

## Thomas Springer, 75

Thomas Ernst Springer, 75, of Tampa, Fla., and formerly of Bluffton, died Tuesday Oct. 17, 2023, at 12:15 p.m. in Tampa.

He was born April 28, 1948, to Ernst Springer and Bertha "Betty" Mae Lehman Springer in the Lutheran Hospital of Fort Wayne. He married Suellen Little Oct. 11, 1982.

He is surived by daughter, Rebecca (Kelly) Thompson of Bluffton; son, Scott (Sally) Springer from his first wife, Carol Betz Springer Myers; son, Chad (Tomoko) of Kasugia, Japan; daughter, Heather Springer of Homosassa Fla.; grandchildren, Lynsey (Brandon) Simanteris, Ryan (Dillon) Whitelaw, Megan (Alex) Gump, Brody and Lucy Springer, Luke and Rio Springer; great-grandchildren Jaiden and Bryson Whitelaw, and Arya Simanteris. He is also survived by brothers, Timothy (Patricia) Springer of Fort Wayne, Terry (Donna) Springer of Fort Wayne, Duane (Karen) Springer of Fort Wayne, and sister, Carol Wilneski of Fort Wayne. He was preceded death by his parents and a sister, Linda Gallmeyer of Fort Wayne

A celebration of life is being planned for the end of January at the Calvary Lutheran Church in Bluffton.

Memorials may be made in Tom's name to American Diabetes Association or to offset the cost of final arrangements directed to Calvary Lutheran Church, 1532 N. Main St. in Bluffton in care of Carol Myers.

## Ronald G. Stewart, 63

Ronald G. Stewart, 63, passed away Tuesday evening, Dec. 12, 2023, at his residence in Bluffton, following an extended illness.

Ron was born in Bluffton on March 9, 1960, to Donald "Gene" Stewart and Judith A. (Murray) Stewart, both parents survive in Poneto. He married Alicia J. (Martin) Feb. 4, 1992, she survives in



Ron was a 1979 graduate of Southern Wells High School. He was a forklift operator for Majestic Manufacturing for many years and was a part-time driver for Family Ford of Bluffton. He enjoyed being outdoors, camping, cooking over his firepit, playing softball and

In addition to his parents and wife, he is survived by one son, Adam Stewart of Bluffton; three grandchildren, Haylee Couch, Brandon Stewart and Josalyn Stewart; and two sisters, Carol (Bruce Smith) Nestleroad of Craigville and Rhonda Stewart of Berne.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Larry Stewart in 2020.

In accordance with Ron's wishes, there will be no public services at this time. A public memorial gathering will be announced at a later date.

Memorials can be made in Ron's memory to Friends Who Care Cancer Relief and should be directed to the funeral home.

Online condolences can be made at www.goodwin-

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Goodwin – Cale & Harnish Memorial Chapel in Bluffton.

## Kimberli D. Kunkel, 54

Kimberli D. Kunkel, 54, of Tampa, Fla., and a longtime resident of Bluffton, died Wednesday morning, Dec. 13, 2023, at Melech Hospice Home in Temple Terrace, Fla.

Funeral arrangements are currently pending at this time with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in

# Wayne E. Penrod, 92

Wayne E. Penrod, 92, of Poneto died Thursday morning, Dec. 14, 2023, at Stillwater Hospice Home in Fort

Funeral arrangements are pending at this time with the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

# Sen. Zay to propose fetal dependent income tax exemption

By LESLIE BONILLA MUÑIZ

**Indiana Capital Chronicle** 

State Sen. Andy Zay said Wednesday that he will introduce legislation considering fetuses dependent children allowing expectant parents to claim an income tax exemption worth \$2,500.

Zay, who is running to represent Indiana's Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, made the announcement in a campaign news release rather than from his sitting office.

The Republican from Huntington said the bill "further values the lives of unborn babies" and "supports parents' ability to provide for their families" by allowing Hoosiers to claim the exemption during pregnancy.

The legislation would benefit about 60,000 families annually, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, and would save them \$7 million each year collectively.

# **Police Notebook**

## **INCIDENTS**

City:

Wednesday, 2:58 p.m., Bluffton High School. Car accident reported, investigation ongoing.

Wednesday, 4:35 p.m., 3600 East 200 North. Driver cited for speeding.

Wednesday, 6:03 p.m., 900 block of Lancaster Street. Caller reported it appeared items had been moved around while they were gone.

Wednesday, 7:56 p.m., Capri Meadows. Report of noisy neighbor, officer noted music was not loud enough for ordinance violation.

Wednesday, 10:14 p.m., Auto Doctor. Driver warned for headlight out, officer smelled odor of marijuana during traffic stop. Vehicle was searched and no marijuana was located.

Thursday, 5:00 a.m.,

Sutton Circle Drive. Caller can pick his wife up. reported a dead deer in the roadway.

Thursday, 6:41 a.m., Main and Washington streets. Claudia Stauffer advised she was distracted in traffic which caused her vehicle to collide with the rear end of Hudson Bailey's truck. The damages did not exceed \$1,001.

Thursday, 11:44 a.m., 300 block of East Central Avenue. Caller reported all four tires had been cut by box cutter or something similar.

Thursday, 11:54 a.m., Capri Meadows. Caller claimed identity theft, stated he was not the one of the paperwork and was going to the Sheriff's Department.

Thursday, 12:28 p.m., 200 block of Oak Forest Drive. Caller requested officer deliver message to pick his wife up. Caller called North Main Street and South back to advise someone else

**County:** Wednesday, 12:55 p.m.,

450 East and Ind. 116, Bluffton. Caller reported someone hit a stop sign at the intersection. State highway contacted and arrived on scene.

Thursday, 4:51 p.m., 5800 East 900 South, Keystone. Welfare check requested for infant. No answer at door, house appeared to be abandoned.

Thursday, 4:56 p.m., Sugar and West Railroad streets, Uniondale. Caller reported they found a bottle of pills on the road and wanted to turn it in. The pills were Acetaminophen, the active ingredient in Tylenol, and Aspirin.

Friday, 8:25 a.m., 1100 block of Garhard Street, Bluffton. Caller reported subjects have over 70 packages that have not been picked up, postmaster was

concerned. Officer contacted subjects who advised they were intentionally leaving packages outside due to a

remodel of the home. Friday, 11:51 a.m., Gerber Bridge. Officer tagged an abandoned vehicle. Now

### they're it. Ossian:

Thursday, 11:57 p.m., 7600 North Ind. 1, Ossian. Welfare check requested for subjects. Both subjects were fine, advised they had cell phone issues.

Friday, 5:03 a.m., 10000 North 100 East, Ossian. Caller reported subject attempted to break into vehicle, unable to locate.

## **ARRESTS**

Lyle Lee Beer, 45, Linger Inn, theft, a Class A misdemeanor. Bond set at \$1,500.

Brittney M. Bannister, 32, Bluffton, disorderly conduct, a Class B misdemeanor. Bond set at \$1,000.



## Firefighter of the Year

On Dec. 13, Gatlin Sunday (right) was awarded Firefighter of the Year by Chief Gray (left). (Photo

# **Optimist Club sponsors** student essay contest

The Optimist Club of Bluffton is encouraging area students to contemplate the phrase "Optimism: How it Connects Us" as part of the Optimist International Essay Contest for the 2023-24 school year.

The Optimist Club will judge the local students' essays based on the theme a determine top winners. Winners will receive a cash award from the club and the winning essays will be sent to the district level where college scholarships are available.

Students wishing to participate in the contest can find out more by contacting the club at 260-223-0926.

"Young students today have so many fresh ideas about the world and their future," said Steve Higgins, club president.

'As Optimists, it is our goal to encourage them to do what we can to bring out the best in each of them. This gives them a wonderful opportunity to tap into their creativity and pursue possible scholarships at the same time."

The Optimist Club of Bluffton has been participating in the Optimist Oratorical Contest for over 20 years and has been active in the community since 1964. Other programs and service projects that the club is involved in includes the kiddie tractor pull, fishing contest, leadership academy and many others.

Optimist International is one of the world's largest service club organizations with over 80,000 adult and youth members in almost 3,000 clubs in the U.S., Canada, and throughout the world.

Carrying the motto "Bringing out the best in youth, our communities and in ourselves," Optimists conduct positive service projects that reach more than 6 million young people per year.

To learn more about Optimist International, please call 314-371-6000 or visit the organization's website at optimist.org.

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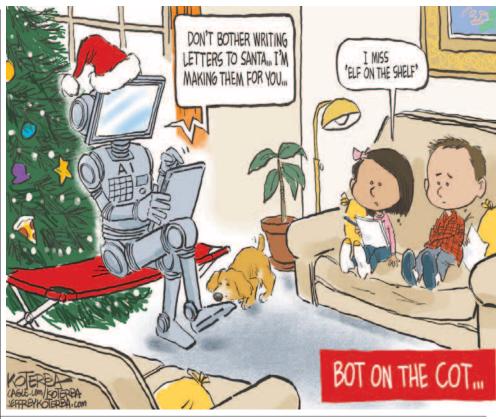




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# The Week That Was - a look back through cartoonists' eyes...









# **Other Opinions**

# The regional dimensions of the border challenges

Given the never-ending partisan brawl over the southern U.S. border, it is not surprising that American voters would believe that the United States faces a wave of migration with little precedent in the history of the world.

And yet, of some 22 million displaced people on the move in the Americas last year, maybe more than 3 million came to the United States. Colombia has received more than one-third of the 7.7 million migrants who have fled Venezuela. The United States has received about 500,000.

This fact should reshape the immigration debate in Washington. If the Biden administration and Congress want to manage the crush of asylum seekers and help the unprecedented number of migrants moving across the Western Hemisphere, they might focus less on hardening the border and more on dealing with the regional dimension of the challenge.

Adam Isacson of the Washington Office on Latin America, a human rights group, points out that countries along migrants' path to the United States have few choices. Stopping migrants and sending them back home is the least realistic. (Honduras, for instance, has seen immigrants from China, Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, India and Uzbekistan. Where should Hondurans "send them back" to?)

So countries along the way are either openly letting migrants in transit through — busing them north as Panama, Costa Rica and Honduras have done - or, like Mexico, performing a sort of Kabuki of cooperation with Washington, occasionally deploying the National Guard, which detains and expels some migrants, to keep Washington happy.

Several have tightened visa restrictions to stanch the flow. Almost every country north of Colombia now requires a visa for Venezuelans. Following Nicaragua's decision to allow visa-free entry for Cubans to continue their journey north, Panama, Costa Rica and Mexico started requiring transit visas to stop the air route from Havana to Managua that had layovers in

Still, nobody is happy with how anybody else is handling the issue. The United States wants more help stopping migrants along the route. It has provided substantial aid — committing some \$2.9 billon since 2017, according to USAID — to help South American countries address the humanitarian crisis caused by mass Venezuelan migration.

But aid groups assess that financing represents only about one-fifth of what is needed. The Colombian government has been calling for more. Overwhelmed by the sheer numbers, in May it stopped offering temporary residence to Venezuelans, so new arrivals have less reason to stop their journey north.

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# The MeToo movement is silent on Hamas

I hated the MeToo movement.

It angered me that women who had waited decades to accuse Bill Cosby of rape were believed as if they were the Oracles of Delphi, and that women who had kept their mouths shut long enough to win Oscars, like Meryl Streep, were heralded for

It seemed that every week brought a new allegation of bad behavior, of neck-sniffing, of lewd looks and in only a very few cases, of actual sexual assault.

But I am also a woman who has spent the last 30 or so years of her life practicing immigration law, and the last 20 or so specializing in asylum.

That means I have a deep understanding of what women go through in other parts of the world, how they are regularly "raped" in cultures that don't consider that a chargeable offense, and how sexual assault is actually employed as a war crime.

The whole MeToo movement actually undermined and trivialized the very real phenomenon of sexual abuse against women.

The one upside of the MeToo movement is that women began to speak out about abuse, even though it tended to trivialize what rape actually was. To

many of us, mere bad behavior by men in positions of authority is not the same thing as having your clothes ripped off and your skin bruised and battered.

But half a loaf is better than nothing, and the crime of rape was at least being raised to the same level as murder. In many ways, it is the equivalent of murder, because it

destroys the human spirit. Which is why I'm surprised that there aren't more of these MeToo

ladies coming out and unequivocally condemning the spirit murder of Israeli women.

As the hostages were released and sent home to their loved ones, it became clear that many of the women had been sexually abused.

We are not talking about crude innuendo, denial of jobs or social media trolling. We are not talking about losing out on some plum role in a Harvey Weinstein blockbuster, or even being included on Jeffrey Epstein's list of "friends."

The women who came back from the hell in Gazan tunnels have talked about being raped over and over again, old women and young girls, married mothers and elementary school students.

They have not even been able to explain every detail of what they suffered, but we can easily grasp the devastating picture.

These women were victims of war crimes. In

2008, the U.N. Security Council-adopted resolution 1820, stating specifically that "rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide.'

It is interesting that the U.N. sees rape as not only a war crime but also a basis for a finding of genocide. Those pro-Palestinian protesters chanting "From the river to the sea" like to throw around that word liberally, no pun intended.

They seem to think that Israel is engaged in an ethnic cleansing of Palestinians because they are dealing with a terrorist insurgent group that uses people as human shields, with less than kid gloves.

They seem to believe that kidnapping women, children and the elderly, brutally murdering them and laughing about it on TikTok is the same thing as a country attempting to defend itself against murderous militants.

But back to the Israeli women. It is clear that these innocents were raped and in some cases slaughtered, by Hamas.

> You would think that every single woman who has ever posted the hashtag #MeToo on her Instagram feed and on

her Facebook page would be vocal in her outrage about what happened in You would think that

someone like Rashida Tlaib or Pramila Jayapal, women who regularly complain about the abuse of women of color, would be at the forefront of con-

demning these brutal attacks on women of color. But with a few notable exceptions on the left,

there has been virtual silence. Worse, even, than the silence is the whataboutism, the equivocation of those who say that Israeli soldiers are also guilty of raping Palestinian women.

My opposition to the MeToo movement was based on its tendency to trivialize true cases of rape and abuse. And it was bipartisan – I've defended Bill Cosby, Al Franken, Daylin Leach and Nick Mic-

But now we are talking about rape, war crimes and genocide, and there is only one side: the side of Jewish women.

If there was any time to raise our voices, that time is now.

Christine Flowers is an Delaware attorney and a columnist. cflowers1961@gmail.com.

# Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 15, the 349th day of 2023. There are 16 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Dec. 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, went into effect following ratification by Virginia.

On this date:

In 1890, Sioux Indian Chief Sitting Bull and 11 other tribe members were killed in Grand River, S.D., during a confrontation with Indian police.

In 1944, a single-engine plane

carrying bandleader Glenn Miller, a major in the U.S. Army Air Forces, disappeared over the English Channel while en route to Paris.

In 1967, the Silver Bridge between Gallipolis, Ohio, and Point Pleasant, West Virginia, collapsed into the Ohio River, killing 46 people.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter announced he would grant diplomatic recognition to Communist China on New Year's Day and sever official relations with Taiwan.

In 1989, a popular uprising began in Romania that resulted in the downfall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

In 2000, the long-troubled Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine

was closed for good. In 2001, with a crash and a large dust cloud, a 50-foot tall section of steel — the last standing piece of the World Trade Center's facade — was brought down in New York.

In 2011, the flag used by U.S. forces in Iraq was lowered in a low-key Baghdad airport ceremony marking the end of a war that had left 4.500 Americans and 110,000 Iraqis dead and cost more than \$800 billion.



# Holiday hijinks

Dear Annie: I'm frustrated with my sister-in-law and the way that she plans he tossed out that I the holidays that she hosts or organizes. Generally, what happens is that she will reach out to the family to see what will work for everyone. We'll make any other plans around the agreed-upon plan. Then, closer to the holiday, my sister-inlaw will change the plans saying that the new plans work better for her family. Most often the new plans conflict with other plans that we've made.

This year she not only changed the day and time of our family get-together but also decided that it would be held at her house rather than ours.

I don't want to miss seeing the rest of our family since we likely won't go to other holiday events that are being held indoors this year, but I feel like, if we keep accommodating her behavior, it will continue to happen. What's your take on it? — Tired of Accommodating

Dear Tired of Accommodating: My take for this year is simple: Don't go to or host indoor gatherings with people outside of your household. As for next year and the years after that, if and when your sister-in-law attempts these lastminute changes, just say no - politely, of course. You can keep it simple: Something like, "We'd like to keep to the time and place that we all agreed to." It's reasonable to ask that everyone stick to the agreed-upon time and place, out of consideration for everyone's schedules. That's the whole point of plans, after all.

Dear Annie: My husband of decades has a habit that I don't care for, and I can't seem to make him understand the problem. I have run out of ideas, have asked counselors and anyone I can that might have an answer or suggestion. I am desperate to see whether you or your readers have any ideas.

The issue is this: If he sees anything around and he doesn't recognize it, he throws it away. If you are right there, then you can stop him. Otherwise, you're out of luck. I check the garbage for items regularly.

Annie The last things by Annie Lane didn't catch were my two photo albums from my childhood. My mom, dad and

great-grandma

worked on those

two albums.



Dear

Needless to say, the albums contained pictures of many individuals who are gone. I can't seem to forgive him and get over it. It's mostly grieving for what I can never see ever again. I thought I'd made him understand that these sentimental items are mine and that he has no right to throw something away without checking with me. Please help... I have tried counseling, both me alone and us together. I have left notes on items from matter-offact to rather nasty. I have tried explaining, every day, not to throw my things away. Please tell me how to deal with this problem. I am at my wit's end! — Missing My Things

Dear Missing: While not considered its own psychological disorder, compulsive decluttering can be a symptom of obsessive-compulsive disorder. I encourage you to find a 2015 article on The Atlantic website, entitled "The Opposite of Hoarding," and see whether the behavior described reminds you of your husband. Though you've tried therapy yourself and attended couples therapy with him, he may benefit from individual therapy on his own, potentially for the treatment of OCD. If I hear any insights from readers, I'll be sure to print them

"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" features favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation. It is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit http://www. creatorspublishing.com for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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## **BLONDIE**







## **ZITS**







## **CRANKSHAFT**







# **My** Answer

By Dr. Billy Graham

Q: Is the Bible primarily about God or about people? It seems writers who wrote the Bible told terrific and hard-tobelieve stories even about

themselves.-B.O.

A: The message of Jesus Christ, our Savior, is the story of the Bible — it is the story of salvation. Profound students of the Bible have traced the story of Jesus Christ from the beginning of the Old Testament, for He is the true theme of the Old as well as the New Testament. The facts of Jesus Christ are the eternal message of the Bible. It is the story of life, peace, eternity, and Heaven. The Bible has no hidden purpose. It has no need for special interpretation. It has a single,

# Message of Jesus **Christ is the story** of the Bible

clear, bold message for every living being — the message of Christ and His provision that people can indeed find peace with God.

Truth is timeless. Truth does not differ from one age to another, from one people to another, from one geographical location to another. People's ideas may differ, customs may change, but the great allprevailing truth stands for time and eternity.

In setting down their forthright messages, Biblical scribes never attempted to gloss over the realities of life. The sins of the great and small are freely admitted, the weaknesses of human nature are acknowledged, and life in Biblical times is recorded as it was lived. The star-

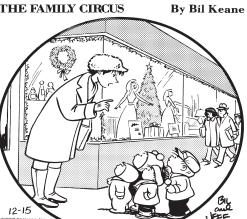
tling thing is that the lives and motivations of these people who lived so long ago have such a modern flavor! As we read, the pages seem like mirrors held up before our own minds and hearts, reflecting our own prides and prejudices, our own failures and humiliations, our own sins and sorrows.

The Bible is divinely inspired by Almighty God, written in ink that cannot be erased by any one person, religion, or belief sys-

(This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.)

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## THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Now, listen to me. We are NOT buying any toys.'

# The LOCKHORNS



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# CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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# **Warriors outshoot Raiders** in ACAC girls' hoops clash

**By RYAN WALKER** WOODBURN — Southern Wells dropped to 0-3 in the ACAC in its 65-41 road loss to Woodlan Thursday night.

The Raiders (7-4) leaned on the three ball to try and keep up in the first quarter, but the stingy Warriors (7-5) legged them out rather quickly with their own shooting and defense.

Karlee Warner got the three-point parade started for the first points of the conference clash, while Kyah Thomas hit two in a row shortly after. Taylor Kneubuhler, Brooke Kneubuhler and Reagan Widenhoefer splashed one apiece and gave the game's fifth lead change in the first four

The Raiders' hot stroke soon dispersed after hitting their first three from deep. Thomas' second triple with 4:42 left in the opening round was the last points during the next eight minutes of game time.

Meanwhile, Woodlan kept the pedal to the medal, pouring a 15-0 run, adding two more makes from downtown by Karina Peppler and Kneubuhler's two

While Woodlan shot just 23 percent in the game, one more than their season average, the six total threepointers made in the first half were enough to change Jessica Killingbeck's plan in a 41-21 deficit at the break.

"It hurt. Our game plan was the rover a little bit and

then they hit some shots that we didn't necessarily anticipate them to hit," Killingbeck said on Woodlan's first-half shooting. "So, we had to come out a little bit further, which pulled us away from the basket, which allowed them to get into their dribble drive offense."

The Raiders shot just fine, but not enough attempts in the first half with an 8-14 showing. Woodlan created turnovers on the defensive front and in turn took 20 more shots than Southern Wells did. That made a difference for the game, as Southern Wells was only a mere 2 percent below Woodlan's total.

Killingbeck also made a switch in the offense, attempting and succeeding at what this team does best: Getting the ball in the paint to Ashlie Needler and Kenzie Paxson.

The forwards scored four of the team's field goals in the second half and finished behind Thomas' 11 points on the scoresheet. Needler had nine, while Paxson tallied seven.

Part of the reason for Needler, the team's leading scorer, not getting more looks was that she was Killingbeck's best option to break the Woodlan fullcourt press.

"We expected Ashley to bring the ball up for us and Ashley is not our point guard," Killingbeck said. "She's got to take more than three shots in a half for us. We talked about it a halftime and (Woodlan) recognized she didn't get as many shots because she was the one having to bring the ball up before and we just can't have that."

Woodlan continued to run away with the score for the rest of the game, taking 21 shots in the third quarter with eight buckets to the Raiders 3-16.

With Thomas' team-high 11 for the night, Killingbeck may have stumbled upon a new weapon. She made her first three triples in the game and hit another jumper later

She said that they moved her from point guard to wing because of her ability to shoot, and it's paid off so far. The sophomore finished 4-7 from the floor.

"Love it," Killingbeck said of Thomas' three-point shooting Thursday night. "That was, I feel like, a good adjustment from our coaching staff. Kyah started out as a point guard, but we know how good she can shoot it. And Collena (Reeves) can shoot it really well too, Collena just has a little bit more varsity experience. So we thought moving her to (point guard) would make us a little bit more successful and I feel like it has and having Kyah on the wing to be able to just catch and shoot for us ... she's getting a little bit more confident and she's starting to figure it out."

Southern Wells will host Northfield in its next game



Southern Wells' Ashlie Needler (middle) drives toward the hoop past Woodlan's Alyssa Anderson, left, in the first half of Thursday night's ACAC game at Woodlan. The Lady Raiders fell to 0-3 in the conference with the 65-41 loss. (Photo by Chad Kline)

at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec.

Woodlan won the junior varsity game 39-15. Gracie Reeves led the Raiders with seven points and Erika Beavans scored four.

sports@news-banner.com

WOODLAN 65, SOUTHERN WELLS 41 At Woodlan SOUTHERN WELLS (3-8, 0-3 ACAC): Kyah Thomas 4-7 0-0 11, Ashlie Needler 3-12 3-6 9, Kenzie

Paxson 3-6 1-1 7, Karlee Warner 2-2 0-0 5, Erika Beavans 2-5 0-2 4, Kaylea Coffel 1-6 2-2 4, Collena Reeves 0-6 1-2 1, Aubree Meyer 0-0 0-0 0, Gracie Reeves 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 14-42 7-13 41.

14-42 7-13 41.

WOODLAN (7-5, 2-2 ACAC): Taylor
Kneubuhler 6-18 4-4 17, Reagan Widenhoefer 4-10 0-0 10, Alyssa Anderson 5-7 0-0 10, Karina Peppler 3-5 0-0
8, Makenna Smith 3-5 0-1 7, Mariah
Thullner 3-9 0-0 7, Brooke Kneubuhler
2-3 0-0 6, Leah Elwood 0-7 0-0 0, Emma McDaniel 0-3 0-0 0, McKenna Goble 0-1 0-0 0, Addison Klotz 0-3 0-2 0, Kyra Elwood 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS: 25-71 4-7 65.

Three-point FG: Southern Wells: 4-12 (Thomas 3-5, Warner 1-1, C. Reeves 0-2, Needler 0-1, Coffel 0-3), Woodlan: 8-33 (Widenhoefer 2-7, B. Kneubuhler 2-3, Peppler 2-3, T. Kneubuhler 1-6, Thullner 1-6, Smith 1-1, L. Elwood 0-5, K. Elwood 0-1, McDaniel 0-2). Rebounds: Southern Wells: 23 (Paxson 8, Needler 5, C. Reeves 4, G. Reeves 2, Meyer 2, Warner 1, Coffel 1), Woodlan: 30 (T> Kneubuhler 7, Anderson 7, L. Elwood 6, Smith 3, Peppler 3, Thullner 2, B. Kneubuhler, K. Elwood 2, McDaniel 1). Turnovers Southern Wells: 16, Woodlan: 5. Fouls: Southern Wells: 8, Woodlan: 14. Fouled Out: None. Technicals:

None. JV: 39-15 Woodlan



Bluffton's Rhett Gerber takes a quick breath as he charges ahead in the 100-yard freestyle race during Thursday night's meet against Fort Wayne South Side. Gerber went on to finish first in the race. (Photo by Chad Kline)

# **High School Calendar**

FRIDAY, DEC 15

BOYS BASKETBALL: DeKalb at Norwell, 7:45 p.m.; Bluffton at Southern Wells, 7 p.m. (JV one half)

SATURDAY, DEC 16

BOYS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Garrett, 7:30 p.m.; Southern Wells at Smith Academy,

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Adams Central at Bluffton, 1:30 p.m. Norwell at DeKalb, 7:30

WRESTLING: Norwell at Wawasee Super Duals, 9 a.m.; Bluffton at New Haven Super 10, 9 a.m. **MONDAY, DEC 18** 

No events scheduled **TUESDAY, DEC 19** BOYS BASKETBALL: Southwood at

Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m. GIRLS BASKETBALL: Bluffton at Churu-

busco, 7:30 p.m. SWIMMING & DIVING (CO-ED): Norwell at Bluffton, 5:30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, DEC 20** 

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Northfield at Southern Wells, 7:30 p.m.

# **Sports Roundup**

# Raiders beat Indians in wrestling match

Southern Wells defeated Mississinewa 63-18 on its wrestling senior night.

**Results** 

• Hosgensan (M) won by forfeit at 106. • Micneor (M) defeated Aidan Carrol by

• Max Miller (SW) won by fall over Flo-

ree at 126. • Ryan Raber (SW) won by forfeit at 132.

• Robbie Freimuth won by forfeit at 138. • Jarin Frauhiger (SW) won by decesion

13-9 at 144. Malakai Capper (SW) won by forfeit at

• Ryker Dollar (SW) won by forfeit at 157. • Chandler Murphy (SW) won by forfeit

at 165 • Case Boxell (SW) won by forfeit at 175. • Person (M) won by fall over Kaden

• Peyton Long (SW) won by fall over

Regnolt at 285. Southern Wells will be at the Spartan Classic at Daleville starting at 9 a.m. Thurs-

## **Norwell sweeps South** Adams, Blackhawk in swim

Norwell swept both South Adams and Blackhawk Christian in both boys' and girls' swimming Thursday night at South Adams.

The boys topped South Adams 100-41, and Blackhawk 97-45. The girls won 109-65 over South Adams and 125-14 over Blackhawk.

# **Event winners**

day, Dec. 28.

• Ethan Williamson, Braden Hoag, Parker McCartney and Rylan Heyerly in the 200yard medley relay

• Kale Meredith in the 200-yard freestyle and in the 100-yard butterfly.

Hoag in the 200-yard IM.

• Eli Thomas in the diving.

• McCartney in the 500-yard freestyle and in the 100-yard breaststroke.

• Williamson, Gage Reinhard, Heyerly and Meredith in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

• Heyerly in the 100-yard backstroke. · Heyerly, Reinhard, Williamson and Meredith in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

• Alaina Barnhart, Ryleigh Huffman, Marlee Meredith and Karrigan Melcher in the 200-yard medley relay. • Ella Krug in the 200-yard freestyle and

in the 500-yard freestyle. • Emerson Meredith in the 200-yard free-

style and in the diving. Cassie Coyne in the 100-yard butterfly.

• Karrigan Melcher, Addyson Heyerley,

Olivia Daniel and Haleigh Reinhard in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

• Marlee Wenger in the 100-yard backstroke

Marlee Meredith in the 100-yard breast-

• Daniel, Coyne, Rilynn Ervin and Emer-

son Meredith in the 400-yard freestyle relay. Norwell will visit Bluffton at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday. Dec. 19.

## Tigersharks both earn win over Archers in swim

• Girls photo on Page 7.

Bluffton swept South Side in the swimming pool Thursday night at home.

The boys' team won 120-55, earning win No. 7 on the season. The girls won 82-55 and pushed their record to 4-4.

# **Results**

**Boys** 

• Noah Brooks, Anthony Hartman, Ashton Arnett and Evan Klopfenstein first in the

• Dalton Rodgers first in the 200-yard freestyle.

Elija Robles in the diving.

• Isaac Wheeler first in the 100-yard butterfly.

• Rhett Gerber first in the 100-yard freestyle. • Brooks first in the 400-yard freestyle.

• Rodgers, Wheeler, Arnett and Brooks first in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

• Ellie Coyne led the team with 16 points. • Lucia Corkwell 14 points.

**Event Winners** 

Coyne, Kierstynn Reed, Corkwell, Emily Hanse and Zoey Schmidt.

Bluffton will host Norwell at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 19.

# **Bluffton-Harrison tops Paul** Harding in MS hoops

Bluffton-Harrison won all three games in middle school basketball Thursday night over Paul Harding.

The eighth grade boys' team won 33-23, improving to 6-3 overall. Gavin Grieser and Reid Abbett led the team with seven points, followed by Cooper Jenkins (6), Gibby Grieser (5), Dawson Lee and Bennett Stoller (4). The seventh grade boys' team won 34-18

and improved to 9-0 on the season. Chase Kistler led the way with 17 points, followed by Vince Lambert (11), Parker Christal, Maddox White and Wyatt Holmes (2).

The seventh grade girls' team won 41-8 and improved to 8-1 on the season. Josie Nash led the way with 15 points, followed by Audrey Mechling (9), Gracie Jellison (6), Khloe Gehrett (5), Averie Patton and Madalynn Narvaez (2) and Aanna Croft (1).



# **NASCAR CUP SERIES**

Last race: Ryan Blaney raced to his first career NASCAR championship by banging his way past fellow contender and 2021 champion Kyle Larson in the closing laps at Phoenix Raceway to give Team Penske back-to-back Cup titles.

Next race: Season openers Feb. 4, Los Angeles (non-points race), and Feb. 15, Daytona Beach, Florida.

**NASCAR XFINITY SERIES** 

Last race: Cole Custer pulled away in a three-wide race with fellow contenders Justin Allgaier and John Hunter Nemechek and held off Allgaier at Phoenix to win his first Xfinity Series championship.

**Next race**: Season opener Feb. 17, Daytona Beach, Florida. NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

Last race: Ben Rhodes' fifth-place finish in a crash-filled, quadruple-overtime Truck Series finale at Phoenix was enough to earn him his second series championship in three years, by one point over Grant Enfinger, while non-championship contender Christian Eckes won for the fourth time this season.

**Next race**: Season opener Feb. 16, Daytona Beach, Florida.

### FORMULA ONE **Abu Dhabi Grand Prix**

Site: Yas Island, Abu Dhabi.

Schedule: Friday, practice, 4:30 a.m. and 8 a.m.; Saturday, practice, 5:30 a.m., and qualifying, 9 a.m.; Sunday, race, 8 a.m. (ESPN)

Track: Yas Marina Circuit.

Last race: Three-time series champion Max Verstappen passed Charles Leclerc twice, the second time with 13 laps to go, extending his record for victories in a season to 18 in Las

Next race: 2024 season opener, March 2, Bahrain. **INDYCAR** 

Last race: Scott Dixon won at Laguna Seca, his third win of the season, all in the last four races. The six-time champion gave Chip Ganassi Racing a 1-2 finish in the standings. A week earlier, teammate Alex Palou became the first driver in

18 years to clinch the title before the final race of the season. Next race: Season opener at St. Petersburg, Florida. NHRA DRAG RACING

Last event: Doug Kalitta won in Top Fuel and Chad Green won in Funny Car in the season finale in Pomona, California. **Next event**: Season-openers March 7-10, Gainesville, Flor-

# WORLD OF OUTLAWS

Next events: Season openers Feb. 8, 9 and 10, Barberville,





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# **News-Banner Scoreboard**

## **FOOTBALL**

## NFL

Thursday's Games
Las Vegas 63, L.A. Chargers 21
Saturday's Games
Minnesota at Cincinnati, 1 p.m. Pittsburgh at Indianapolis, 4:30

Denver at Detroit, 8:15 p.m. Sunday's Games Atlanta at Carolina, 1 p.m. Chicago at Cleveland, 1 p.m. Houston at Tennessee, 1 p.m. Kansas City at New England, 1

N.Y. Giants at New Orleans, 1 p.m. N.Y. Jets at Miami, 1 p.m. Tampa Bay at Green Bay, 1 p.m. San Francisco at Arizona, 4:05

Washington at L.A. Rams, 4:05

p.m.
Dallas at Buffalo, 4:25 p.m.
Baltimore at Jacksonville, 8:20

Monday's Games
Philadelphia at Seattle, 8:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 21
New Orleans at L.A. Rams, 8:15

Saturday, Dec. 23 Cincinnati at Pittsburgh, 4:30 p.m. Buffalo at L.A. Chargers, 8 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 24
Cleveland at Houston, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Green Bay at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Indianapolis at Atlanta, 1 p.m. Seattle at Tennessee, 1 p.m. Washington at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m

Jacksonville at Tampa Bay, 4:05 .m.
Arizona at Chicago, 4:25 p.m.
Dallas at Miami, 4:25 p.m.
New England at Denver, 8:15 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 25
Las Vegas at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia, 4:30

p.m. Baltimore at San Francisco, 8:15

## **BASKETBALL High School**

Thursday Boys' Scores Batesville 72, Milan 37

Centerville 60, Hagerstown 50 East Chicago Central 82, Michigan

City 71
Hammond Morton 70, Highland 33
Hanover Central 71, Whiting 34
Indpls Metro 87, KIPP Indy 37
N. Decatur 79, Cambridge City Lincoln 49 Shelbyville 53, New Castle 47

Thursday Girls' Scores Austin 78, Clarksville 56 Bedford N. Lawrence 31, Silver Creek 28

Benton Central 56, Tri-West 46 Bloomington North 56, Bloomington South 38 Boonville 62, Evansville Bosse 28

Castle 52, Henderson Co., Ky. 33 Cin. Mercy-McAuley, Ohio 34, E. Central 21

Clinton Central 57, Frankfort 17 Columbus East 43, Columbus North

DeMotte Christian 59, N. Newton 22 Eastern (Greene) 44, White River Valley 40

Eminence 46. Indpls Attucks 35 Evansville Mater Dei 33, N. Posey Evansville North 64, Evansville Har-

Floyd Central 50, Seymour 38 Fremont 57, Westview 49
Ft. Wayne Concordia 76, Garrett 43 Gibson Southern 65, Pike Central 5 Hammond Central 56, Griffith 22 Henryville 49, Madison Shawe 37 Indiana Deaf 50, Indpls Scecina 42 Indpls Cathedral 45, New Palestine

Indpls Chatard 52, University 45 Indpls Irvington 24, GEO 15 Indpls Ritter 54, Indpls Herron 35 Indpls Shortridge 62, Indpls Wash-

ington 28 gton 28 Jac-Cen-Del 67, Edinburgh 26 Jasper 40, Dubois 23 Jay Co. 63, New Castle 24 Jennings Co. 64, Madison 23 Kankakee Valley 41, Morgan Twp

Lakeland Christian 43, Granger

Lakewood Park 66, Hamilton 10 Lanesville 52, Crawford Co. 39 Lapel 46, Monroe Central 35 Linton 39 Shakamak 26 Loogootee 34, Barr-Reeve 30 Maconaquah 62, Peru 30

Madison-Grant 49, Anderson Prep Academy 48 Meade Co., Ky. 58, Corydon 51 N. Judson 46, Culver 19
N. Knox 54, Wood Memorial 48
New Prairie 57, Jimtown 38
Northwestern 61, Eastern (Green-

Orleans 55, Perry Central 30 Parke Heritage 58, Riverton Parke

Penn 56, Bremen 29 Providence 70, New Albany 44 Randolph Southern 60, Muncie

Burris 25 Rising Sun 42, Milan 36 Rochester 38, N. Miami 28 Rock Creek Academy 72, South-

western (Hanover) 60 S. Bend Adams 36, S. Bend Clay 32 S. Bend Washington 66, Glenn 14 S. Central (Union Mills) 57, Oregon-Davis 38

Salem 32, N. Harrison 24 Scottsburg 68, Mitchell 26 Seeger 37, Covington 24 Shenandoah 50, Daleville 23 Sheridan 43. Bethesda Christian 40 Springs Valley 53, Bloomfield 25 Switzerland Co. 55, Hauser 32 Tippecanoe Valley 44, Winamac 30
Tri-County 46, W. Central 42
Triton Central 41, Speedway 29
Vincennes (South Knox— 66, Princ-

eton 62 W. Lafayette 63, Hamilton Hts. 44 W. Washington 94, Crothersville 18 Wapahani 45, Cowan 12 Washington 59, Forest Park 23 Whiteland 46, Beech Grove 21 Woodlan 65, Southern Wells 41 Zionsville 52, Indpls Ben Davis 31

## College

Men's Basketball Scores Wisconsin 75, Jacksonville St. 60 Marquette 84, St. Thomas-Minne-sota 79

Women's Basketball Scores Baylor 99. Delaware State 39 Minnesota 96, Grambling 64 Princeton 66, Rutgers 55 DePaul 90, Northwestern 65 Wisconsin 78, St. Thomas-Minne-

**NBA** 

Wednesday's Games New Orleans 142, Washington 122 Philadelphia 129, Detroit 111 Miami 115, Charlotte 104 Toronto 135, Atlanta 128 L.A. Lakers 122, San Antonio 119 Houston 117, Memphis 104 Milwaukee 140, Indiana 126 Brooklyn 116, Phoenix 112

Utah 117, New York 113 Thursday's Games Boston 116, Cleveland 107 Chicago 124, Miami 116 Minnesota 119, Dallas 101 Denver 124, Brooklyn 101 Oklahoma City at Sacramento, late Utah at Portland, late. Golden State at L.A. Clippers, late

Friday's Games
Detroit at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Indiana at Washington, 7 p.m. New Orleans at Charlotte, 7 p.m. Atlanta at Toronto, 7:30 p.m. L.A. Lakers at San Antonio, 7:30

Orlando at Boston, 7:30 p.m. Houston at Memphis, 8 p.m. New York at Phoenix, 10 p.m. Saturday's Games

Detroit at Milwaukee, 6 p.m. Philadelphia at Charlotte, 7 p.m. Atlanta at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m. Chicago at Miami, 8 p.m. Indiana at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Brooklyn at Golden State, 8:30 p.m.
Dallas at Portland, 9 p.m. Oklahoma City at Denver, 9 p.m. Utah at Sacramento, 10 p.m. New York at L.A. Clippers, 10:30

## **HOCKEY**

Wednesday's Games

Pittsburgh 4, Montreal 3, SO New Jersey 2, Boston 1, OT N.Y. Islanders 4, Anaheim 3 Colorado 5, Buffalo 1 Winnipeg 5, Los Angeles 2

Thursday's Games
Columbus 6, Toronto 5, OT
Philadelphia 4, Washington 3, SO
Carolina 2, Detroit 1 St. Louis 4, Ottawa 2 Minnesota 3, Calgary 2, SO Tampa Bay at Edmonton, late Chicago at Seattle, late Florida at Vancouver, late

Friday's Games
Anaheim at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m. Boston at N.Y. Islanders, 7:30

Nashville at Carolina, 7:30 p.m. Ottawa at Dallas, 8 p.m. San Jose at Arizona, 9 p.m. Buffalo at Vegas, 10 p.m.



Bluffton's Kierstynn Reed takes a breath during a lap of the 400-yard freestyle (Photo by Chad

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Cash4Life — 10-11-22-36-52, Cash Ball: 03

Quick Draw Midday -01-06-19-24-28-33-35-39-40-45-58-59-62-63-65-67-71-75-76-79, BE: 40

Daily Three-Midday – 06-03-08, SB:02 Daily Three-Evening —

02-02-08, SB: 01 Daily Four-Midday — 05-05-08-09, SB: 02 **Daily Four-Evening** 

07-08-03-08, SB: 01 **Quick Draw Evening** - 03-10-13-15-16-23-27-29-34-40-46-53-57-65-66-

68-70-73-75-76, BE: 15 **Hoosier Lotto** — Estimated jackpot (for Saturday): \$1.2 million

**MEGA MILLIONS** Estimated jackpot (for Friday): \$28 million **POWERBALL** 

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Saturday): \$535 million

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# **Public**

**BIDDING ENDING DECEM-**BER 17 - 6 p.m. EST - Ronald H. Jackson estate, owner. Online only personal property auction! 300 lots featuring: household, antiques, furniture, glassware, collectible Bossom chalkware, tools, long & hand guns & much more! Auction pick up: Dec. 18, 2-6 p.m., 3934 Summersworth Run, Fort Wayne, IN. Krueckeberg Auction & Realty LLC, 260-724-7402, Kjauction.com

**DECEMBER 23-JANUARY** 1 - Online only auction -Various consignors, seller. Modeline MCM floor & table lamps and Art Nuevo, Presidential collection, advertising, toys, early Moxie thermometer. 25+ Nativity scenes, antiques, vintage primitives, artifacts, trains, Fenton, Haviland & Franciscan china, antique furniture, military items, salesman samples and miniatures, coins & currency. Preview: Dec. 26 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. and Dec. 28 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m., 102 South Jefferson, Ossian. Sale manager, Rod Fetters. *The* Steffen Group Inc., 260-824-3006, www.steffengrp.com.
BIDDING NOW OPEN AND

STARTS CLOSING DECEMBER 27 - 10 a.m. EST - Whites Meat Market, owner. Complete liquidation. Meat saws, scales, display coolers, retail shelving, stainless sinks and tables, Herring Hall Marvin safe and much more! Auction pick up Dec. 29, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. EST, 46 W 400 S #1, Kokomo, IN. *Krueckeberg* Auction & Realty LLC, 260-

**DECEMBER 31-JANUARY 7** Estate of Mary Lynn Laut-

24-7402, Kjauction.com

zenheiser, seller. Personal property online only auction. John Deere mower, lawn & garden, furniture, Christmas, books, household. Open houses: Jan. 4 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Jan. 6 from 10 a.m. to noon, 4917 E 100 N., Bluffton, IN. Isaac Stoller, sale manager, The Steffen Group Inc., http://www.steffengrp.

com, 260-824-3006.

JANUARY 11 - 6 p.m. Estate of Mary Lynn Lautzenheiser, seller. 4917 E. 100 N., Bluffton, IN. One-of-a-kind property w/quick access to Bluffton, Decatur, Fort Wayne. Main home was once township school building, and has covered porch walk through to previous dance studio that has potential to be fourth living unit. Property also offers detached two car garage and two-unit apartment building. Open houses: Jan. 4 from 4-6 p.m., Jan. 6 from 10 a.m.noon. Isaac Stoller, sale manager, The Steffen Group Inc., http://www.steffengrp.com, 260-824-3006.

# **SUDOKU ANSWER**

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## Public Notice

SUMMONS - SERVICE BY PUBLICATION STATE OF INDIANA

SS: COUNTY OF WELLS )
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF WELLS COUNT BLUFFTON, INDIANA PHH MORTGAGE CORPORATION

PLAINTIFF CAUSE NO: 90C01-2311-MF-000023

C.S.; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND/OR DEVISEES OF JEREMY A. SMITH, DECEASED; ESTATE OF JEREMY A. SMITH, DECEASED DEFENDANTS

JEREMY A. SMITH, DECEASED;

NOTICE OF SUIT To the defendants above named, and any other person who may be concerned.

You are notified that you have

been sued in the Court above named. The nature of the suit against you is the foreclosure of a mort-

gage upon the property legally described as follows: Part of the NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 26, Township 28 North, Range 12 East, Wells

County, Indiana; more particularly

described as follows: Commencing at a point at the NW Corner of the NE 1/4 of Section 26, T28N, R-12E; thence Southerly, Four Hundred Twenty-Two and No Tenths Feet (422.0') to the point of beginning; thence S 73 degrees 11'E, Ninety-Six and No Tenths Feet (96.0') to a point; thence N 79 degrees 39'E, One Hundred Eighty-Seven and Eight Tenths feet (187.8') to a point; thence N 65 degrees 35' E, One Hundred Eighty-One and One Tenths Feet (181.1') to a point; thence N 57 degrees 14' E, Two Hundred Thirty-Six and Three Tenths Feet (236.3') to a point; thence N 50 degrees 29' E, Two Hundred Sixty-Three and Eight Tenths Feet (263.8') to a point; thence N 31 degrees 14' E, Fifty-Three and Nine Tenths Feet (53.9') to a point on the North Section Line; thence Westerly, Eight Hundred Sixty-Nine and Four Tenths

Feet (869.4') to the point of commencing; thence Southerly 422.0' to the point of beginning. Containing 6.06 Acres. Commonly known as: 4524 East 800 North

Ossian, IN 46777 This summons by publication is specifically directed to the following defendant(s) whose whereabouts

are unknown. Unknown Heirs and/or Devisees of Jeremy A. Smith,

Estate of Jeremy A. Smith, In addition to the above-named defendants being served by this

summons, there may be other defendants who have an interest in this lawsuit. An answer or other appropriate response in writing to the Complaint must be filed either by you or

your attorney with the Clerk of the Court for Wells County at: Clerk of Wells County

Courthouse, 102 West Market Street Bluffton, IN 46714

on or before the 21st day of January, 2024, (the same being thirty (30) days after the Third Notice of Suit), and if you fail to do so a judgment may be entered against you for what the plaintiff has demanded.

Codilis Law, LLC Electronically Signed by: /s/ Robert S. Kruszynski 15488-45 ATTEST

Clerk, Wells Circuit Court Attorney for Plaintiff Codilis Law, LLC 8050 Cleveland Place Merrillville, IN 46410 (219) 736-5579 15-23-01393

NOTE: This law firm is a debt nb 12/8, 12/15, 12/22

hspaxlp

# Israel's mass arrest campaign sows fear in northern Gaza

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — The İsraeli military has rounded up hundreds of Palestinians across the northern Gaza Strip, separating families and forcing men to strip to their underwear before trucking some to a detention camp on the beach, where they spent hours, in some cases days, subjected to hunger and cold, according to human rights activists, distraught relatives and released detainees themselves.

Palestinians detained in the shattered town of Beit Lahiya, the urban refugee camp of Jabaliya and neighborhoods of Gaza City said they were bound, blindfolded and bundled into the backs of trucks. Some said they were taken to the camp at an undisclosed location, nearly naked and with little water.

"We were treated like cattle, they even wrote numbers on our hands," said Ibrahim Lubbad, a 30-yearold computer engineer arrested in Beit Lahiya on Dec. 7 with a dozen other family members and held overnight. "We could feel their hatred."

The roundups have laid bare an emerging tactic in Israel's ground offensive in Gaza, experts say, as the military seeks to solidify control in evacuated areas in the north and collect intelligence about Hamas operations nearly 10 weeks after the group's deadly Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel. Militants killed about 1,200 people and abducted over 240 that day.

In response to questions about alleged mistreatment, the Israeli military said that detainees were "treated according to protocol" and were given enough food and water. The army spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said the men are questioned and then told to dress, and that in cases where this didn't happen, the military would ensure it doesn't occur again. Those believed to have ties to Hamas are taken for further interrogation, and dozens of Hamas members have been arrested so far, he said.

Photos and video showing Palestinian men kneeling in the streets, heads bowed and hands bound behind their backs, sparked outrage after spreading on social media.

To Palestinians, it is a stinging indignity. Among those rounded up were boys as young as 12 and men as old as 70, and they included civilians who lived ordinary lives before the war, according to interviews with 15 families of detainees.

"My only crime is not having enough money to flee to the south," said Abu Adnan al-Kahlout, an unemployed 45-year-old with diabetes and high blood pressure in Beit Lahiya. He was detained Dec. 8 and released after several hours when soldiers saw he was too faint and nauseated to be interrogated.

Israeli forces have detained at least 900 Palestinians in northern Gaza, estimated Ramy Abdu, founder of the Genevabased Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, which has worked to document the arrests. Based on testimony it collected, the group presumes Israel is holding most detainees from Gaza at the Zikim military base just north of the enclave.

The Israeli military declined comment on where the detainees were taken.

Palestinians cowered with their families for days as Israel poured heavy machinegun fire into Beit Lahiya and Jabaliya, the firefights with Hamas militants stranding families in their homes without electricity, running water, fuel or communications and internet service.

"There are corpses all over the place, left out for three, four weeks because no one can reach them to bury them before the dogs eat them," said Raji Sourani, a lawyer with the Palestinian Center for Human Rights in Gaza. He said he saw dozens of dead bodies as he made his way from Gaza City to the southern border with Egypt last week.

Palestinians recounted soldiers going door to door with dogs, using loudspeakers to call on families to come outside. In most cases, women and children are told to walk away to find shelter.

Some released detainees described enduring humiliating stretches of near-nudity as Israeli troops took the photos that later went viral. Some guessed they were

driven several miles before being dumped in cold sand.

Released detainees said they were exposed to the chill of night and repeatedly questioned about Hamas activities that most couldn't answer. Soldiers kicked sand in their faces and beat those who spoke out of turn.

Several Palestinians held for 24 hours or less said they had no food and were forced to share three 1.5liter bottles with some 300 fellow detainees.

Returning home brought its own horrors. Israeli soldiers dropped detainees off after midnight without their clothes, phones or IDs near what appeared to be Gaza's northern border with Israel,

those released said, ordering them to walk through a landscape of destruction, tanks stationed along the road and snipers perched on roofs.

Israeli officials say they have reason to be suspicious of Palestinians remaining in northern Gaza, given that places like Jabaliya and Shijaiyah, in eastern Gaza City, are well-known Hamas bas-

Human rights groups say mass arrests should be investigated.

"Civilians must only be arrested for absolutely necessary and imperative reasons for security. It's a very high threshold," said Omar Shakir, Human Rights Watch's regional director.



# Older Americans to pay less for some treatments as drugmakers penalized for big price jumps

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of older Americans could pay less for some of their outpatient drug treatments beginning early next year, the Biden administration announced Thursday.

The White House unveiled a list of 48 drugs — from chemotherapy treatments to growth hormones used to treat endocrine disorders — whose prices increased faster than the rate of inflation this year. Under a new law, drugmakers will have to pay rebates to the federal government because of those price increases. The money will be used to lower the price Medicare enrollees pay on the drugs early next year.

"For years, there's been no check on how high or how fast big pharma can raise drug prices," President Joe Biden said Thursday, speaking in a lab at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. "Let's call this for what it is – it simply is a rip off. They're ripping off Medicare. They're ripping off the American people. We're now fighting back."

This is the first time drugmakers will have to pay the penalties for outpatient drug treatments under the Inflation Reduction Act, passed by Congress last year. The rebates will translate into a wide range of savings — from as little as \$1 to as much as \$2,700 — on the drugs that the White House estimates are used every year by 750,000 older Americans.

The types of drugs on the government's list vary. They include generic drugs, medications taken orally or injected, and treat a variety of disorders or illnesses, according to a review by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists of the adminis-

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The House passed a defense

policy bill Thursday that

authorizes the biggest pay

raise for troops in more than

two decades, overcoming

objections from some con-

servatives concerned the

measure did not do enough

to restrict the Pentagon's

diversity initiatives, abortion

travel policy and gender-

major legislation Congress

will consider before leav-

ing for the holiday break,

though negotiations contin-

ue on a bill to aid Ukraine

and Israel and boost border

represents about a 3 percent

increase from the prior year.

The bill serves as a blueprint

for programs Congress will

seek to fund through follow-

negotiating a final defense

policy bill for months after

each chamber passed strik-

ingly different versions in

July. Some of the priorities championed by social

Lawmakers have been

up spending bills.

The spending called for

bers.

security.

But all of the drugs, the White House

said, raised their prices significantly this year, many by nearly 20 percent.

The price decreases will only be seen for patients who access the drugs on Medicare Part B, the government outpatient care coverage. But the rebates are "an important tool to discourage excessive price increases," Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, the administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, said Thursday in a statement.

Only a small number of drugs met the criteria for penalties, pointed out Stephen Ubl, the president of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, also called PhRMA.

"It's a tiny fraction of overall working medicines," he said.

As it readies for a 2024 reelection campaign, the Biden administration has rolled out a number of efforts to push pharmaceutical companies to lower drug prices. Last week, the White House announced it was considering an aggressive, unprecedented new tactic: pulling the patents of some drugs priced out of reach for most Americans.

'On no. We've upset Big Pharma again," the White House posted on the social media platform X, formerly Twitter, last week, just hours after the announcement.

The president plans to make his push for lower drug prices a central theme of his reelection pitch to Americans.

The U.S. Health and Human Services agency also released a report on Thursday that will help guide its first-ever negotiation process with drugmakers over the price of 10 of Medicare's costliest drugs. The new prices for those drugs will be negotiated by HHS next year, in the middle of next year's presidential campaign.

parent who's sent a child off

to summer camp and they

came back a monster," Rep.

Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., said in

opposing the bill. "That's

what we've done. This bill

came back in far worse

said the House bill elimi-

nated the position of the

chief diversity officer at the

Às an example, Gaetz

shape.

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Big pay raise for troops in defense

conservatives were a no-go

for Democrats. Negotiators

dropped them from the final

version to get it over the fin-

well with some Republican

lawmakers, though most

did end up voting for a bill

that traditionally has broad,

bipartisan support. About

twice as many Republicans

That did not go over

bill sent to Biden. Conservatives

stymied on cultural issues

ish line.

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